

SOCI-325
SAGES DEPARTMENT SEMINAR
GREAT BOOKS: Imagination, Reality, Inquiry and Everyday Life
FALL 2009
T-Th 1:15-2:30

Instructor: Gary T. Deimling, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: T-Th 11:15-12 W 1:30-2:30

Course Objective and Description: This course's primary objective is to examine the variety of conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches used by Sociologists to social reality and everyday life. The course will examine these themes as they are portrayed in three sociological classics, and a biographical novel that ties many of the course themes together. This will be a writing intensive class, with five specific written assignments, one for each of the four books and a final assignment that is "integrative" and summary in nature.

Course Requirements: The basic course requirements are for the student to attend class regularly, participate in class discussion, be prepared and deliver the assigned class presentations, and complete course writing assignments. In order to prepare for class students need to read the selected sections of the course books prior to the class covering that section.

Class Presentations- Since this is an upper division (300-level seminar, students share an important portion of the responsibility for the class discussion and presentation. Participation is an integral part of the overall evaluation of each student. In order to be prepared to fully participate, the reading assignments need to be completed PRIOR to the week that the material is scheduled. Each week one or more students will each be asked to prepare a presentation for the class on the assigned book section, that is, to be the "class expert" on a specific reading assignment. Students will be assigned these presentations at least a week in advance on a rotating basis. To facilitate discussion the presenter should provide the class with a 1-page outline/overview of the book section. I encourage students to develop a "binder" which can include the handouts from fellow students. REMEMBER, ALL STUDENTS should read ALL MATERIAL as assigned in order to be prepared for the seminar discussion.

Individual Book Reports- Each student will prepare a report on each of the four books that represent the core of the course material. The focus of these reports will be to provide a succinct summary of major themes each book represents as well as an application of the book to one or more historical or contemporary events that has broad societal implications. These reports will be due the last class (Thursday) of the week AFTER we have completed discussion of the book. In the case of the report on the fourth book, it will be due by NOON of FIRST DAY OF FINAL EXAMS. Each report should be between 5 and 7 pages (double spaced, 12 font, ¾ inch margins) and follow the guidelines provided during the second week of class.

Final Writing Assignment- Each student will prepare a final paper that will synthesize the books read in class in terms of a number of "cross cutting" themes. These themes represent major sociological concepts and/or paradigms. The range of specific concepts/paradigms that will be considered will emerge from the discussion of the specific books. A schematic of these concepts/paradigms will be constructed by the class by the 10th week of class to encourage the student to begin the paper at this point in the course. The final paper must be turned in no later than NOON on the DAY OF THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD. Late papers will not be accepted and scored as an F, so plan ahead. That assignment should be between 10 and 15 pages (double spaced, 12 font, ¾ inch margins) and follow the guidelines provided in class after the mid-term break.

Evaluation: The final grade will be based on the following criteria:

Book Reports (4 @15%)	60%
Final Writing Assignment	25%
Class presentations, participation	15%

“Great” Books

The Sociological Imagination by C.W. Mills (SI)
The Social Construction of Reality by P. Berger and T. Luckmann (SCR)
The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life by E. Goffman (PSEL)
Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by R. Pirsig (ZAMM)

Tentative Semester Reading Schedule

WEEK/TOPIC	BOOK
(Week 1) <i>Introduction to “Imagination, Reality, Inquiry and Everyday Life”</i>	SI
(Week 2-4) <i>The Sociological Imagination</i>	SI
(Week 5-7) <i>The Social Construction of Reality</i>	SCR
(Week 8-10) <i>The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life</i>	PSEL
(Week 11-13) <i>Zen and the Art....</i>	ZAMM
(Week 14) <i>Synthesis</i>	ALL